

B. Claims

Please amend claim 1 as follows. A complete listing of all the claims appears below; this listing replaces all earlier amendments and listings of the claims.

1. (Currently Amended) A printing apparatus which divides a printing area in a scanning direction on a printing medium into a plurality of regions and has a print buffer having a column data amount stored that is smaller than the data that may be printed through one main scan of a print-head, wherein the print buffer is divided into a plurality of first regions corresponding to divided regions of the printing medium for storing column data ~~corresponding to the divided regions~~ of a plurality of predetermined column amount amounts, each first region being divided into a plurality of second regions in correspondence with the number of color components, comprising:

input means for sequentially inputting block data corresponding to the first divided regions and having a plurality of compressed raster data, wherein the block data contains a plurality of color component data and a code representing a data delimiter between first color component data and second component data;

acquisition means for acquiring N-bit raster data from the block data by decompressing the compressed raster data and for determining the code;

conversion means for converting the raster data into column data;

transfer means for sequentially transferring the raster data acquired by said acquisition means to said conversion means;

second transfer means for sequentially transferring N column data converted by said conversion means to the print buffer;

storage means for storing the N column data transferred from said second transfer means in each second region of the print buffer on the basis of the code determined by said acquisition means; and

control means for executing transfer processing of said transfer means, transfer processing of said second transfer means, and conversion processing of said conversion means in synchronism with a predetermined signal.

2. - 3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said acquisition means outputs a second predetermined signal to said conversion means when the code is determined.

5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said conversion means comprises holding means for holding N raster data transferred from said transfer means, and performs longitudinal/lateral conversion processing after said holding means holds the N raster data.

6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said conversion means comprises holding means for holding N raster data transferred from said transfer means, and when the second predetermined signal is input while said holding means holds M ($M < N$) raster data, sets (N-M) "0" data in said holding means and then performs longitudinal/lateral conversion processing.

7. - 10. (Cancelled)